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Kerala AWII

Besides the English books belonging to the English-speaking brothers, 12 other families own a total number of 16 vernacular (paper) books. They are all puranic stories. There are 30 palm-leaf manuscripts in all, which either are puranic stories or deal with such subjects as conjuring and black arts. There are also some Vedic manuscripts in the family of the jenmi.

Village administration.—There is no panchayat. The village has a Government official "Adhikari" who collects the revenue. He has also given a little civil and criminal authority which however is rarely made use of. There is another official "Menon" who is the surveyor and assessor of taxes on lands, etc.

There is practically no sanitary administration. Sometimes a vaccinator visits the country and gets some children vaccinated.

There is a Police station at Chalisseri which has jurisdiction over this place. Weekly or monthly one constable pays a visit and makes a report that the king's peace is kept scrupulously.

The Tahsildar or the Revenue Inspector or a Land Records Inspector may sometimes pay a visit to the amsam officials, but he sees none of the people.

For some time past, thefts have been increasing in this desam. A few youths, born and bred up in rank illiteracy, are straying away from the path of righteousness, and the poor man's property is becoming insecure. Recently this has come to the notice of the police and they have begun to have a watchful eye over some of them. But none of these have been yet of a serious nature.

There are a small number of law-suits against the ryots by the jenmis at all times, but over and above this there is not much litigation. But recently however there arose two law suits between ryots which were the result of bad blood and high words.

Small cases were dealt with satisfactorily by the village munsif this year.

History and prospects of the village.—Centuries ago, as far back as 1,800 years, this desam must have formed a part of the famous division of Kutnad. The name of the once historic land of Kutnad, which at one time covered the whole of the Mid-Kerala, is now confined to the little desam that lies contiguous to Kothachira. The ruins still traceable on the plains below the Kutnad hill, of temples and a fortress, and the large number of ruined walls seen in the vicinity, suggest the existence of a flourishing city in this spot in the past.

But about Kothachira in the more recent past. The country must at one time have been governed by local chieftains from whose hands the Brahman jenmis who now hold the lands got them with the advent of the age of Brahmanic dominance. There are families which still hold the name of "Naduvashis," i.e., the governors of the country, who are now labourers and landless ryots. They still cling with faith and reverence to their old traditions and ceremonial forms which they practised when they were masters of the country.

But within the past few generations itself there has been a great economic change noticeable. There are old men still living who can attest to the state of things thirty or forty years ago. From them, we hear the rise and fall of some of the families. Those